

Curator of the Compton Herbarium, National Botanic Gardens, Kirstenbosch, Cape—and who referred at the same time to the distribution of the tree, stating “It occurs from Clanwilliam northwards into S. W. Africa and Griqualand West.”

As mentioned by Stempffer (1967), the caterpillars (or early stages) of *M. silenus* and *M. subornata* have been described by Farquharson and by Lamborn, in 1911 and 1913 respectively, and those of the former species by Jackson in 1937; while Murray has covered those of *M. silenus ficedula* in 1935, and Clark and Dickson (in *Life Histories of the South African Lycaenid Butterflies*) in 1971.

“Blencathra”, Cambridge Avenue, St Michael’s Estate,  
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## Observations on British Butterflies in 1970

By Dr C. J. LUCKENS

The first free-flying butterfly of the season is always a special delight, and a worn *Aglaia urticae* L. bravely sunning itself in the garden on March 26th was indeed a welcome herald of Spring. Apart from the release of a few more housebound *A. urticae* and a *Scoliopteryx libatrix* L. fluttering to get out into the weak sunlight during that week, we had to be content with this brief glimpse of Spring until well into April.

On April 9th, however, my father saw our first *Gonopteryx rhamni* L. in the garden and a few days later, just before our return to Glasgow, I myself saw one near Bolney.

We saw nothing of butterflies after that until the early Spring ‘Whites’ started flying in the Glasgow area on May 9th. I saw *Pieris rapae* L. around the University and a few *Pieris napi* L. and *A. urticae* near Kirkintilloch.

A few days later we went over to the moss near Kilmacolm. It was a perfect Spring day—curlews were nesting among the grass tufts, Cuckoos called in the surrounding copses, and at the entrance to the moss a pair of Stoats played to within a few feet of us. Yellowish heavily-marked females of *P. napi* were beginning to emerge (males were plentiful), and there were also a number of quite bright looking *A. urticae*.

I started to get very worried about my final exams. in Medicine after that, but in the lull between the end of the written papers and the start of the clinical exams, we took a few days off to stay with friends at Connel, near Oban. We were very fortunate in that our last three days there were gloriously sunny, and on June 1st we travelled up to Fort William in search of *Carterocephalus palaemon* Pall.

Carrying our small son, my wife and I quartered the ground for this elusive insect; but though we saw several *Callophrys*

*rubi* L. and took a few dusky female *P. napi* we again had no success with *C. palaemon*. Commander Harper has since informed me that it has become very scarce in Lochaber.

The following day we made an even longer journey from Oban to Badenoch. It was a great pleasure to see our first Scottish *Antocharis cardamines* L. alongside the road just before Laggan Bridge. Thereafter males of this species became quite plentiful along the Spey valley, though not one female was seen all day.

In the afternoon we explored the birch woods around Aviemore, where plenty of richly-coloured *Clossiana euphrosyne* L. were skimming over the violets and bugle, together with more *A. cardamines*, *P. napi*, and a few *Phragmatobia fuliginosa* L.

Our last day was spent around Oban where we dropped in at some of the coastal localities for *Euphydryas aurinia* Rott. We were a few days too early for this fritillary, but *Lycaena phlaeas* L. was common and there were a few *Nymphalis io* L. about also.

June 13th was the next day I could feasibly take off and fortunately the weather promised fair, so we sped on our way to Argyll again.

*E. aurinia* was out in very good numbers in several local colonies between Lochgilphead and Oban but already beginning to get worn. As usual there is a wide range of variation but in general *aurinia* is of a large and strongly coloured race in this area.

Flying with this attractive butterfly were *Coenonympha pamphilis* L., *P. napi*, very tattered *N. io*, and *Callimorpha jacobaea* L., but this usual attendant *Polyommatus icarus* Rott. had not yet emerged.

We left Glasgow on the 19th June for the south of England, paying a flying visit to Meathop Moss en route. Here *Maniola jurtina* L. was about, and a sprinkling of *Coenonympha tullia* f. *philoxenus* Esp., the latter not nearly so abundant on the moss as I had been led to believe. It was fairly early in the season, I had no guide to the locality, and perhaps sampled a less favourable part of it, but I got the general impression that the future of *C. tullia philoxenus* is a bit precarious in this country if Meathop is its stronghold. I would be very glad to be reassured to the contrary.

We stayed the night in Lincolnshire and the following morning visited Castor Hanglands Reserve.

It was a hot sunny day and numbers of *Ochlodes venata* Br. and Grey were buzzing about in the rides. Little else was on the wing, however, and about midday we went on to Monkswood, where we were treated to the sight of scores of *Strymonidia pruni* L. over the old blackthorns. Indeed this rare and local hairstreak seemed one of the most abundant butterflies in the wood, and we spent some time watching it flying around the tops of the bushes.

About 4 p.m. we left Monkswood in order to fit in a quick

visit to Salcey Forest on our way south.

On arrival almost the first butterfly we saw was the one we had come for—*Leptidea sinapis* L., fluttering feebly through the tangled underbrush. This delicate insect seemed reasonably common here so I took a few specimens (some were still fresh at this late date) to compare with Devonshire and Sussex races in my collection. In one of the rides a late *A. cardamines* made a surprise appearance. It was very disappointing, however, to find that one of the old 'iris' breeding grounds in Salcey had been destroyed since our last visit the previous August. We arrived at my parents house near Haywards Heath late that evening.

Our next butterfly expedition was on the 25th June when we went to Blean Woods in Kent. The last time we visited this area two years previously, my wife and I had found a thriving colony of *Mellicta athalia* Rott. in one of the lesser known enclosures, and we were keen to see how it had fared in the interim.

Soon after we entered the wood we started to see numbers of this dark little fritillary skimming over the herbage, and found that it had greatly extended its former confines in this locality. In fact the original site of the colony had become too overgrown to support much cow-wheat, and the butterflies had mostly spread to a large flowery area, which two years ago had been composed of tree stumps of felled chestnut with little or no vegetation in between. This part of the Blean Woods system is not deliberately managed to suit *M. athalia*, but evidently the wood is still periodically coppiced and thus the cow-wheat thrives and hopefully so will the butterfly dependent upon it.

I came face to face with a half-grown dog fox in one of the rides, and he quite unconcernedly turned and trotted along the track in front of me for about fifty yards before scampering aside into the undergrowth. Later we all went to cool off in the quiet atmosphere of Canterbury Cathedral.

On June 27th I went to a wood about ten miles away, near Uckfield, where a good variety of butterfly species were flying. *Limenitis camilla* L was freshly out and sailing about the bushes in plenty; *Thymelicus sylvestris* Poda., *Aphantopus hyperanthus* L. and summer *P. napi* were just emerging; a few *Vanessa cardui* L. were about with *M. jurtina*, *P. icarus*, *Pararge megera* L., *Pararge aegeria* L.; and late and tattered *Erynnis tages* L. and *Clossiana selene* Schiff. were still flying. There were *G. rhamni* larvae to be found on nearly all the buckthorns.

I was particularly looking for *Argynnis cydippe* L. for which this wood was noted at one time, and soon I saw a large swift-flying *Argynnid* which I assumed was the butterfly in question. It perched on a tall field-thistle for a restless instant and then was off like the wind. Later I netted a large fritillary in one of the broad rides but to my surprise it turned out to be a perfect male *Argynnis aglaia* L. instead of the other

species. All the subsequent captures in the wood have proved to be *A. aglaia* and I wonder if it has recently colonised the wood and displaced the very similar *A. cydippe* by natural competition.

My parents travelled North with us on June 29th for my graduation in Glasgow. We took the journey in easy stages and included the Lake District. The weather was not of the best however, and conditions in the Honister Pass did not look promising enough to warrant a foray after *Erebia ephron* L. which is said to be abundant here.

We did not have much time to spare in Glasgow, but on July 4th we went to the Lochgilphead area where there were disappointingly small numbers of worn *C. tullia* about on Moine Mhor. However, we collected a few larvae of *N. io*, *Saturnia pavonia* L. and *Lasiocampa quercus callunae* L.

I snatched a few hours on July 7th to make a quick inspection of Flanders Moss near Stirling. On the wooded outskirts of this wild waste of cottongrass and heather *A. hyperanthus* was emerging, a very local species in Scotland, and of a constant ashy-grey tinge on the underside when compared with the more richly-coloured Southern English forms. On the moss itself *C. tullia* was about but already in tatters and again in fewer numbers than usual.

On our way south again on July 9th we dropped in at Arnside, and in spite of mediocre weather saw plenty of freshly emerged *A. cydippe*. One or two *Eumenis semele* L. of a very small and bright form skipped among the stones, and there were a few *P. icarus* and *Aricia agestis salmacis* about.

Back in Sussex it seemed high time to start looking for *Apatura iris* L., and on July 11th I went with Dr A. Rydon to West Sussex. Soon after arrival at the forest we met Mr Haines and Mr Meredith, both with the same quarry in mind as ourselves. It was the most beautiful day and many species were flying—*Argynnis paphia* L., *L. camilla*, *Polygonia c-album* L., *Thecla quercus* L., early *G. rhamni*, and the usual woodland *Satyrids* including the first *Maniola tithonus* L. In spite of ideal weather I saw only one *A. iris*, and that a short glimpse as he skipped between oaks.

Dr Rydon and I left our two friends about 6.30 p.m., who decided to wander slowly back for a last look around—just long enough for Mr Meredith to take a fine male *iris* about ten minutes after our departure!

The next day the first flush of *Celestrina argiolus* L. (Summer brood) started to emerge around my parents garden—a most welcome sight after several seasons of scarcity. This dainty little butterfly remained abundant thereabouts until mid-August, when the last one was seen on the 18th. Numbers of ova and larvae could be found on practically any ivy clump in the area.

On the 13th July I drove over to the West Sussex Woods in the morning and again met Mr Haines, who told me of his friends success two days previously. As we were talking, a

male *A. iris* swooped down to my car (which I had parked strategically), flew around it for a few seconds while we stood immobile, dashed down the ride and then came back straight over our heads.

Quite a lot of adrenaline circulated for a minute or two!

The cause of it flitted about the oaks above us for a while before finally making off. I had to leave before midday but returned in the afternoon to find that Mr Haines had had only sporadic sightings of *iris* for the remainder of the day but had netted and released *A. aglaia*, an unusual butterfly in these woods nowadays.

July 15th was a generally cloudy day with occasional sunny spells, and I set off for a well-known locality for *iris* on the Hants/Surrey border. On arrival at about 1 p.m. I immediately saw two *iris* over the oaks, but when I got to the prime spot in the wood I could see no less than five at once, soaring about the oak crowns and engaging each other in aerial combat. One suddenly swooped down to the shrubs behind me, and sat just a few feet out of reach with spread wings for a moment before sailing up to the high tops again. This spectacular display of *iris* ceased about 3.30 p.m. and thereafter I caught only occasional glimpses of this superb butterfly.

A few *L. camilla* were about, looking diminutive beside *iris*, and there were quantities of *T. quercus* flying about the oaks and chestnuts.

After an interview in Ashford, Kent, the following day I called into the Uckfield wood on my way back. Weather conditions were poor, but I saw several *L. camilla*, *A. paphia* and a few *A. aglaia* careering along the rides.

The weather was again cloudy with chinks of sunshine on 17th July, when the whole family went to the Hampshire locality. Soon after arrival, my parents and my wife saw their first *iris* over the oaks and settled back to watch them with binoculars, while I wandered along the rides hoping for a capture. When I returned my wife told me that while I was away a male *iris* had leisurely inspected the car only a few feet away. After repeatedly calling me to no avail, she eventually grabbed a spare net and narrowly missed capturing "His Imperial Majesty"!

In spite of the long journey involved, I could not keep away from this place, and got back the following morning at about 8.45 a.m. I only saw one *iris* early on, but Mr C. Wyatt who was there when I arrived captured a perfect male on the forest track. There were plenty of *T. quercus* and *C. argiolus* and a fresh brood of *P. aegeria* was emerging.

The crowds started to gather about mid-morning so I left for the relative solitude of the West Sussex localities. In one of the copses there later that afternoon, I saw *iris* flap slowly straight through some scattered young oaks about twelve feet up—a type of heron-like flight I had not observed before in this species.

July 20th was changeable but generally sunny, and I went

to the wood near Uckfield where I hoped to net a female *A. aglaia* for breeding. For some time I chased these elusive butterflies which were flying wildly and haphazardly among young trees in a heathy part of the wood. Stopping to get my breath, I suddenly saw an adder sunning itself within striking distance of my canvas-shod foot! Thereafter I went with caution, and going with caution one simply does not catch fast-flying *aglaia*. The first newly emerged *N. io* were about here.

The next morning I made the long journey into Hants again, getting there just before 9 a.m., but *iris* was not forthcoming. Large numbers of *T. quercus* were coming down to moisture on the paths, however, about nine out of ten being females. I waited around for a while with Mr Wyatt who had also come early to the forest, but we saw no *iris* and eventually adjourned to his house where I had the pleasure of seeing part of his fine collection.

The weather turned rather sour after July 23rd, and apart from the first *Lysandra coridon* Poda. buffeted by the wind on the downs near Lewes, we saw little in the way of butterflies until the 29th, when my wife and I went over a stretch of downland in the Eastborne area. A number of local chalk butterflies had been reported from this ground around 1945 and we were interested to see how it had fared as a locality in the intervening twenty-five years. We were pleasantly surprised and recorded twenty-five different butterfly species just during August. On the first visit we saw scores of *L. coridon*, *P. icarus*, *P. megera*, *C. argiolus*, and a few *Melanargia galathea* L. and boldly marked *E. semele*.

The next day, July 30th, in the sunbaked rides of a West Sussex wood second brood *L. sinapis* were flying in fair numbers—males only at this date. *Vanessa atalanta* L. was very scarce this season, but on this occasion a female of the species was noted—while I was stalking a roe hind with my camera in one of the forest paths.

The last day of July was hot and sunny, and I went along with Dr Rydon to the Hampshire border where we visited several localities. In some of the woods *A. paphia* was still fairly fresh (we saw one pair *in cop.*, the male carrying the female); *C. argiolus* and *T. quercus* were frequent, and the trackside thistles were attracting plenty newly-emerged *G. rhamni* and *P. c-album*. We returned via Woolmer Forest where *E. semele* was flying, and visited the Chiddingfold Woods to see how the Summer brood of *L. sinapis* was coming along in Surrey. These dainty little whites were out in good numbers, fluttering along the verges of vetch and trefoil with *P. icarus*.

The hot humid weather continued into the first few days of August, and on the 3rd I went over to the North Downs around Mickleham. The morning was very misty at first but soon it became brighter. *P. icarus*, *A. agestis* and *L. coridon* were numerous, but I was looking for *Hesperia comma* L.

which turned out to be rather difficult to find. I saw it in one or two places over a wide area, mostly as single specimens. *A. aglaia* was fairly frequent in one downland valley, and much less wild than those I had been chasing in the Sussex wood, so at last a female was secured for breeding.

This splendid butterfly was also flying over the South Downs near Eastbourne the following day. *L. coridon* and *A. agestis* were now out in full strength in this locality, and there were still a few *M. galathea* flying. We were pleased to see a few *H. comma* here also, the first time we've ever found this species in Sussex. The weather became very changeable and we did not visit this place until August 11th, when on our arrival at the slope in fine weather almost the first butterfly we saw was a freshly emerged male *Lysandra bellargus* Rott. This delightful butterfly became abundant here as the days of August proceeded. *H. comma* was also gathering strength, and a pair was seen *in cop*. We did not see *A. aglaia* or *M. galathea* this time, but *E. semele* was everywhere in the hot sun and there were plenty of *L. coridon*, *A. agestis*, *T. sylvestris*, etc.

In the afternoon we investigated the downs around Lewes and took a perfect female *L. coridon* var. *semi-syngrapha* on arrival but *L. bellargus* had not emerged here.

I was very worried about this stretch of downland, which had taken a terrible trampling from cattle over the winter, and in March had looked so bare and cut up that I could hardly credit anything could survive. Much to my relief I was proved completely wrong when we visited the Lewes downs on the 15th August, and found *L. bellargus* even more plentiful than last year. I took a good ab. *striata* of *L. bellargus* and noticed others on successive visits. *L. coridon*, *A. agestis*, *P. icarus* and *P. megera* were all common. We were able to visit this locality frequently over the next fortnight. *L. bellargus* seems strongly entrenched over a wide area here, and is really plentiful in favoured little hollows. However, I have never seen *M. galathea*, *E. semele*, *A. aglaia* or *H. comma* here, all of which occur with *L. bellargus* at the aforementioned Eastbourne locality. Fresh *L. bellargus* were to be found at both Lewes and Eastbourne in the last few days of August when we visited the colonies for the final inspection of the season. The other species were mostly in tatters or finished but the astonishing thing was the large numbers of *M. jurtina* around that looked newly emerged.

I took up a hospital appointment in Ashford, Kent, at the beginning of September, and thereafter expeditions were few. We were disappointed to find the Wye Downs National Nature Reserve overrun by sheep and practically cropped bare. *C. pamphilus* was the only butterfly seen. However, on September 23rd we walked along Folkestone Warren and saw a number of autumn species including a single worn male *bellargus*. This was a surprise for we had heard that this insect had become really scarce in the area. It was a fine warm day

and a few *G. rhamnii* and a single *V. atalanta* were seen in the lanes through Orlestone Forest on our return journey.

Apart from a couple of afternoons unsuccessfully searching for ova of *Thecla betulae* L., this virtually concluded our observations on butterflies for this year. It was a memorable one for us in many respects.

From the end of June to the beginning of September circumstances provided us with unparalleled opportunities for butterfly hunting, and in addition to that it was a splendid year for nearly all species.

Of the scarcer insects *A. iris* in particular was literally abundant in some localities, and *S. pruni* was common in more than one of its haunts. *E. aurinia* had an excellent year in Argyll, and so had *L. bellargus* and *A. aglaia* in East Sussex; and *C. argiolus* enjoyed a real population explosion throughout its range.

On the other hand *V. atalanta* was unusually scarce and we did not see one *Colias croceus* Fourc. throughout the season.

It may be interesting to add that in the last two seasons only, my wife and I have recorded no less than fifty species of butterfly in Britain—out of the sixty that regularly breed here. All of these were flying naturally in the wild. It is a source of great pleasure to us to add a new species each year but this becomes increasingly difficult, and a hard core of five natives remain that we have never seen.

Pinefield, Scaynes Hill, Sussex.

## Why just "Schiff" ?

By CHARLES F. COWAN

Every recent list and article on European moths and butterflies contains names which are attributed to "Schiff." What-ever's happened to Denis?

All these names were first published in the famous *Wiener Verzeichniss*, written anonymously by joint authors who called themselves "einige Lehrer am k. k. Theresianum", or Professors at the Imperial Theresian Academy (closed in 1784).

The "W.V.", as it was generally cited in deference to its anonymous authors, had a long gestation, the preface having been written and dated in March 1771. Even so, its birth was somewhat premature. It first appeared in 1775 under an apparently temporary title; *Ankündigung eines systematisches Werkes von der Schmetterlinges der Wienergegend* (Announcing a classification of the Viennese moths and butterflies). A review published on 7 December 1775 identified the two authors as Professors Denis and Schiffermüller, and mentioned that it comprised 322 pages and "8" plates [presumably an error for 3 plates]. There is a copy of this in the Library of the Museum and another in Linnaeus' own Library held by the Linnean Society of London; the latter indexed now under (just)